

Prog-794
c.1

The PARLOW STRING QUARTET

TENTH CONCERT

THIRD SERIES

KATHLEEN PARLOW, First Violin

WILLEM DEHÉ, Violoncello

HARVEY PETERSON, Second Violin

ROMAIN VERNEY, Viola

Hall for Chamber Music—Mills College

Program for Wednesday Evening, March 25, 1931—8:15 o'clock

I

Quartet in D minor, Kochel No. 421 *Mozart*

Allegro

Andante

Menuetto-Allegretto

Allegro ma non troppo

II

Quartet in E minor *Smetana*

("From My Life")

Allegro vivo appassionato

Allegro moderato a la Polka

Largo sostuneto

Vivace



COMING EVENTS

Wednesday, April 8

8:15 p. m.—The London String Quartet, Chamber Music Hall

Wednesday, April 15

8:15 p. m.—Two Piano Recital, Chamber Music Hall. Miss Gladys Buell
and Miss Winston Johnson

Explanatory Notes on Part II of Program

Frederick Smetana, the father of Czech national music, has written comparatively few works which afford the hearer an insight into the soul of their composer. There are a very few such works among his operas, but his chamber music compositions include such examples as the G minor Trio - which he wrote following the death of his beloved little daughter - and the String Quartets in E minor and D minor. The E minor quartet was subnamed "From My Life" by Smetana himself, and the one in D minor is assumed to be a sequel to this quartet. "From My Life" was completed on December 29, 1876 - two years after Smetana had lost his hearing. As he said on various occasions, it was his object in this quartet to give a musical description of his own career - which explains the title of the work.

According to Smetana's own interpretation, the subject of the first movement is "propensity for art in the early days, preponderance of romantic sentiment, indescribable longing for something which I could not express or even definitely imagine, and also a foreboding, as it were, of my coming misery. It is this fateful sound of the highest tones in my ear which announced my approaching deafness in the year 1874. I have permitted myself this little bit of jesting just because it was so fatal to me. Second movement: Quasi Polka, leads me into reminiscences of my merry youth when I, as a composer of dancing pieces, lavished my music upon the young people, when I myself was widely known as a passionate lover of dancing." Concerning the middle section of this movement Smetana says: "I wish to point out that in this movement I have given musical form to my memories of the aristocratic circles in which I spent many years of my life. The third movement, Largo sostenuto, calls up my memories of the happiness of my first love for a girl who later became my faithful wife." The fourth movement is realization of the element of national music; joy over this success which is interrupted by the fatal catastrophe; beginning of deafness; outlook into a sad future; passing for a recovery yet, recollecting the early stages of the composer's career.

Smetana adds: "This then was the object of the composition, which is purely personal and therefore scored for only four instruments which, like intimate friends, discuss among themselves the things which move me so deeply." Smetana submitted the quartet to the Society for Chamber Music but it was returned to him as unsuitable for performance "on account of the doubtful style and owing to its insurmountable technical difficulties". Its first performance did not occur until three years after its completion, in 1879, when it was publicly played at Prague. And only one year later Liszt, Smetana's protector, ordered the score and parts of the work and arranged for a performance of the quartet at Weimar before an illustrious audience with unusually great success. Later the "Bohemian String Quartet" placed the work on their programs; since then "From My Life" has become a favorite chamber music composition which occupies a prominent place in the repertory of virtually all of the famous quartet organizations.

Explanatory Notes on Part II of Program

Frederick Schenck, the father of Greek national music, has written comparatively few works which afford the student an insight into the soul of their country. There are a very few such works among his operas, but his chamber music compositions include such examples as the 5 minor Trio - which he wrote following the death of his beloved little daughter - and the String Quartet in E minor and B minor. The B minor quartet was dedicated "From My Life" by Schenck himself, and the one in D minor is assumed to be a sequel to this quartet. "From My Life" was completed on December 28, 1898 - two years after Schenck had lost his daughter. As he said on various occasions, it was his object in this quartet to give a musical description of his own career - which explains the title of the work.

According to Schenck's own interpretation, the subject of the first movement is "progress" for art in the early days, the predominance of romantic sentiment, indefinable longing for something which I could not express or even faintly imagine, and also a foreboding, as it were, of my coming misery. It is this foreboding mood of the highest tones in my work which announced my approach to death in the year 1898. I have permitted myself this little bit of jesting but because it was so fatal to me. General movement: Great Polish, leads me into reminiscences of my native town when I, as a composer of dancing music, lavished my music upon the young people, when I myself was widely known as a passionate lover of dancing. Concerning the middle section of this movement Schenck says: "I wish to point out that in this movement I have given myself form to my memories of the extraordinary times in which I spent many years of my life. The third movement, large scherzo, deals with my memories of the happiness of my first love for a girl who later became my faithful wife. The fourth movement is a realization of the dream of national unity; joy over the success which is interrupted by the fatal catastrophe; beginning of darkness; outlook into a sad future; passing for a recovery yet, reflecting the early stages of the composer's career.

Schenck adds: "This then was the object of the composition, which is purely personal and therefore suited for only four instruments which, like intimate friends, discuss among themselves the things which move me so deeply." Schenck dedicated the quartet to the Society for Chamber Music but it was returned to him as unsuitable for performance "on account of the doubtful style and owing to the instrumental technical difficulties". His first performance did not occur until three years after his completion, in 1898, when it was publicly played at Prague. And only one year later, Schenck's publisher ordered the score and parts of the work and arranged for a performance of the quartet at Vienna before an illustrious audience with unusually great success. Later the "Schubert String Quartet" placed the work on their program; also then "From My Life" has become a favorite chamber music composition which occupies a prominent place in the repertoire of virtually all of the famous quartet organizations.